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Plato. Timaeus on Atlantis.

Based on the materials of the book ["Atlantis. Exodus."](#)

*There is nothing new in the world
except the history you do not know.*

Harry S Truman

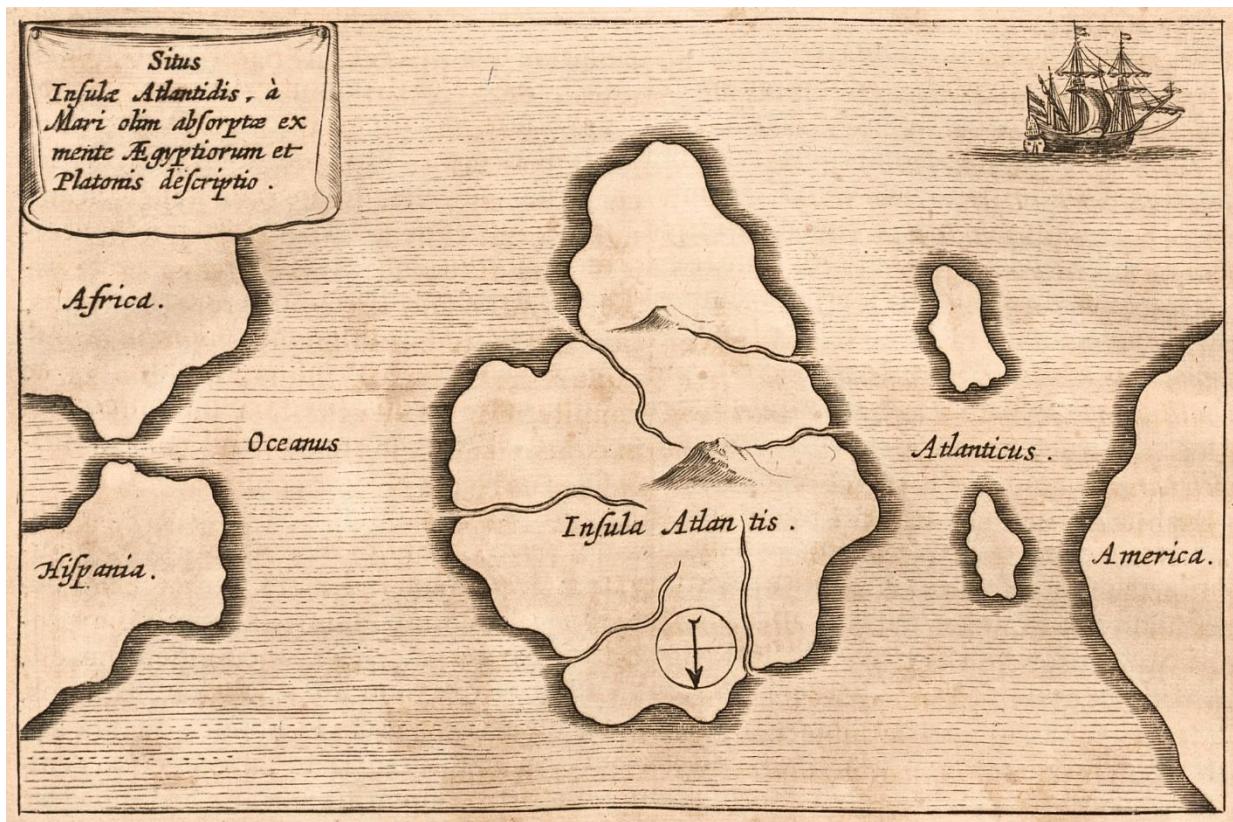


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Foreword

Plato is an Athenian philosopher of the classical period of ancient Greece, the founder of the Platonic school of thought, and the Academy, the first institution of higher learning in the Western world. He lived and worked in the middle of the first millennium BC. The exact dates of his life are unknown, but probably from 428/427 or 424/423 to 348/347 BC. For a society not versed in philosophy, he is known as the first and only person (apart from the American Sleeping Prophet Edgar Cayce, who provided a vast amount of material on state of Atlantis, obtained by an esoteric method which are not recognized by the scientific community) to mention and describe the “mythical” state of Atlantis, its location and its death. Meantime, the philosopher himself never expressed the idea of searching for it.

The ancient author left a many works in which we can find a lot of interesting information about the past history of our civilization. This article focuses on the existence of Atlantis and its influence on the emergence of our civilization. Plato “encoded” information on this subject in three of his works: *Republic*, *Timaeus* and *Critias*.

Philosophy is a science that seeks truth through logical reasoning. Plato was an outstanding philosopher. We should not doubt that he could step away from the principles of logical thinking or be inconsistent in his works. However, his three dialogues – *Republic*, *Timaeus*, and *Critias* – show some inconsistency: a dialogue about the ideal city-state in ten books, the legend of Atlantis, discussions about the cosmos, the demiurge, the elements, the human body, and at the end - a return to the legend of Atlantis that was dropped off in the middle of a sentence. But everything is not as simple as it seems on a superficial reading of his works. In fact, all three works have a single task of telling the story of Atlantis and its great affairs. This is what we are going to talk about now. In this context, we are interested in *Timaeus* dialogue, which is the main description of the great projects of Atlantis.

Plato's theater and its characters

First of all, we should clarify that the dialogues are just a theatrical play. Plato points to this out in the words of Critias:

“For, if we can sufficiently recall and relate what was said long ago by the priests and brought here to Athens by Solon, you the audience in our theater will find, I am confident, that we have put on a worthy performance and acquitted ourselves of our task.” [Critias. 108d]¹

Consequently, the characters in the dialogues are fictional, but real historical people behind them give a certain meaning to their remarks. The *Timaeus* dialogue has four characters: Socrates, Timaeus, Critias, and Hermocrates. Before turning to the story of Atlantis, Plato gives a brief description to each of them:

“Take Timaeus here. He's from Locri, an Italian city under the rule of excellent laws. None of his compatriots outrank him in property or birth, and he has come to occupy positions of supreme authority and honor in his city. Moreover, he has, in my judgment, mastered the entire field of philosophy. As for Critias, I'm sure that all of us here in Athens know

¹ Plato. Complete Works. *Timaeus*. Translated by Diskin Clay. Edited, with Introduction and Notes, by John M. Cooper. Hackett Publishing Company, Indianapolis/Cambridge. eBook ISBN: 978-1-60384-671-4

that he's no mere layman in any of the areas we're talking about. And many people whose testimony must surely be believed assure us that Hermocrates, too, is well qualified by nature and training to deal with these matters." [Timaeus. 20a-b]

The real Critias was a statesman of Ancient Athens, belonged to the highest Athenian aristocracy, and, more importantly, was one of the thirty Athenian tyrants who ruled Athens in 404-403 BC. Critias belonged to the highest Athenian aristocracy and, as a typical representative of his class, was a supporter of the oligarchic system – at first moderate, and by the end of his life radical. As we know, tyranny is strongly associated with lie, exploitation, violence, restriction of civil liberties and rights, brutal censorship, and distortion of history in favor of the ruling power. As a representative of the authorities, he undoubtedly has a knowledge of history that is inaccessible to the common people and is therefore well versed in the issues raised in the *Timaeus* dialogue: "*he's no mere layman in any of the areas we're talking about.*"

Hermocrates – originated from an aristocratic Syracusan family – was famous for his oratory and patriotism and was a skilled strategist. He also called on the Sicilian cities to end their civil strife and form an alliance against Athens. The latter circumstance makes Hermocrates an opponent of Critias. Plato gave Hermocrates only one line in the dialogue, in which he expresses doubt about the Critias' story and therefore asks Socrates to confirm its veracity:

"And then Critias brought up a story that goes back a long way. Tell him the story now, Critias, so he can help us decide whether or not it will serve the purpose of our assignment." [Timaeus. 20d]

This leads us to the idea that the Critias' story of Atlantis is a deliberately distorted and incorrect version. Plato points to it in several places in his works.

The ancient Greek Pythagorean philosopher Timaeus was born around 400 BC. He is sometimes referred to as Timaeus of Locri. The name indicates its origin from the city of Locri in the Italian province of Calabria. Timaeus once held the highest honorary positions in that city. It is worth noting that the laws in that Italian city were established by philosophers and not by oligarchs, as in Athens. This character reflects Plato's own view of who and how should establish laws in the state. Therefore, in Plato's work, the character of Timaeus embodies honesty and justice.

Socrates was also an ancient Greek philosopher who lived during the time of Plato (c. 469-399 BC). In ancient Athens, attitudes towards Socrates were ambivalent. To some, he was the personification of a great sage; to others, a dishonest charlatan who misled the youth and disrespected the gods. He was known not only for his teachings but also as a destroyer of the public Athenian foundations, for which he was sentenced to death. Probably because of his views, Plato defined his character in the *Republic* as the "creator" of a just social state whose laws and principles contradicted the ones of oligarchic Athens.

Three about one

The next issue that we need to clarify is that all three dialogues have a single purpose – to tell the story of the affairs of Atlantis.

First, Plato links the *Republic* to the *Timaeus* dialogue with Socrates' remark:

"All right, I'd like to go on now and tell you what I've come to feel about the political structure we've described. My feelings are like those of a man who gazes upon magnificent

looking animals, whether they're animals in a painting or even actually alive but standing still, and who then finds himself longing to look at them in motion or engaged in some struggle or conflict that seems to show off their distinctive physical qualities. I felt the same thing about the city we've described. I'd love to listen to someone give a speech depicting our city in a contest with other cities, competing for those prizes that cities typically compete for. I'd love to see our city distinguish itself in the way it goes to war and in the way it pursues the war: that it deals with the other cities, one after another, in ways that reflect positively on its own education and training, both in word and deed — that is, both in how it behaves toward them and how it negotiates with them.” [Timaeus. 19b-c]

Several phrases in this quotation deserve special attention. Plato compares the described state, which does not exist on Earth, with images of animals. At the same time, he suggests “*to look at them in motion or engaged in some struggle or conflict that seems to show off their distinctive physical qualities.*” By mentioning their physical qualities, Plato likely means the state’s social structure. However, if the state described is only fiction, how can one predict its behavior? The decision in critical situations is made by one or more people, depending on the current conditions and their personal qualities. However, Plato speaks of the behavior of this state as something that has already happened: “*I'd love to see our city distinguish itself in the way it goes to war and in the way it pursues the war.*” Therefore, we conclude that the further narrative in *Timaeus* contains certain events that actually occurred.

The second phrase: “*it deals with the other cities, one after another, in ways that reflect positively on its own education and training, both in word and deed*” – draws our attention to the behavior of citizens in difficult times for their state. It means that properly educated citizens should join with professional soldiers in the defense of their country. This phrase establishes the fact of the transformation of the civilian strata of the population into fighting defenders. War, like any battle, is usually symbolized in literature by the image of fire. We should remember this allegory as Timaeus refers to this image often, calling it “kind” or “body.”

Thus, the dialogue *Timaeus* narrates of great and marvelous deeds of an ideal state and is a continuation of the *Republic* dialogue.

In its turn, *Critias* continues the *Timaeus* dialogue. It is believed that this part has reached our times incomplete, as its narrative ends in mid-sentence. However, this is not the case, and here is why.

In the *Timaeus*, Plato tacitly determined who would give praise to the men of the ideal state:

“<...> I charge myself with being quite unable to sing fitting praise to our city and its men. <...> (Poets and sophists - Y.A.) are bound to misrepresent whatever these leaders accomplish on the battlefield when they engage any of their enemies, whether in actual warfare or in negotiations.

So that leaves people of your sort, then. By nature as well as by training you take part in both philosophy and politics at once.” [Timaeus.19d-e]

That is, the oligarch and statesman Critias and the philosopher and also statesman Timaeus will talk about the practical affairs of the state described by Socrates. Both characters utter long

monologues, although the bulk of the narrative belongs to Timaeus. What is surprising, however, is that Timaeus does not say a word in his monologue about either the state, its men, or its affairs, but instead devotes his entire monologue to the Demiurge, the birth of the cosmos, and the four Kinds. What could this mean? Has Plato gone astray in his narrative, or has he lost the logical thread? Neither one nor the other. Timaeus' monolog is written in a particular way that Plato was forced to resort to. But now we are talking about Critias' unfinished story about Atlantis.

So, it was Critias who first began to outline the well-known story of this "mythical" state. Right at the beginning of his monologue, the ancient oligarch made two completely unambiguous statements:

"CRITIAS: Let me tell you this story then, Socrates. It's a very strange one, but even so, every word of it is true. It's a story that Solon, the wisest of the seven sages once vouched for." [Timaeus. 20d-e]

Plato says that Critias' story should not be trusted. And if we consider that the representative of the ruling oligarchy is "*no mere layman in any of the areas we're talking about*", then his version of Atlantis is just a fabrication. In the second statement, Critias points to the unfinished work of Solon:

*"Now someone, a member of our clan, said that he thought that Solon was not only the wisest of men in general, but that his poetry in particular showed him to be the most civilized of all the poets. (The man may have been speaking his mind, or else he may have just wanted to make Critias [the grandfather of our Critias – Y.A.] feel good.) And the old man — how well I remember it — was tickled. He grinned broadly and said, 'Yes, Amynander, it's too bad that Solon wrote poetry only as a diversion and didn't seriously work at it like the other poets. **And too bad that he never finished the story he'd brought back home with him from Egypt.** He was forced to abandon that story on account of the civil conflicts and all the other troubles he found here when he returned. Otherwise not even Hesiod or Homer, or any other poet at all would ever have become more famous than he.'"* [Timaeus. 21b-d]

It turns out that the story of Atlantis, retold by Grandfather Critias to his grandson Critias, was written by Solon, which he did not finish! And here we must emphasize one interesting circumstance. If Solon had personally told the story of Atlantis, brought back from Egypt, to an ancient relative of Critias, then he would have had to tell it in full, even though he might not have time to write it down on paper. In this case, Critias would retell it in dialogues as complete version. But his story breaks off just as Solon's story breaks off. Such synchronicity suggests that no one told anyone anything and that Critias simply read Solon's unfinished story he found in some archive. Thus, the "lost" part of the Critias dialogue was never lost. It simply never existed. Plato used this device to indicate to the reader that Critias' story of Atlantis was true only in some details, but, in general, it was fiction. However, if we exchange the names of Athens and Atlantis in his legend, then we can find some similarities between the structure of the Atlantean state and the positions of the ideal state, touched upon in *Republic*.

But there is another fact that completely destroys the Critias' story. Critias claims that the ancient state of Athens rose up in defense of peoples enslaved by Atlantis and entered into war with it. At the same time, part of the Athenian army, which was on the territory of the island state of Atlantis, died, sinking along with it. Meanwhile, Plato claims that the state of Atlantis perished

as a result of a great tectonic cataclysm around the 10-9th millennium BC. However, the lands of the future Athens were not settled until the end of the 4th millennium BC, and it did not become a full-fledged state until the middle of the 2nd millennium BC. That is, the death of Atlantis and the birth of Athens are separated by almost 8,000 years. Therefore, the Greek army could not resist Atlantis in any way, as the latter no longer existed at the time of the rise of Athens.

Furthermore, by placing the story of Solon on a par with the works of Homer and Hesiod, Plato hints that the story of Solon is as fictional as the works of these authors. In *Republic*, Plato criticized these authors and their false myths rather harshly:

- “— *I do, but I don't know which ones you're calling major.*
- *Those that Homer, Hesiod, and other poets tell us, for surely they composed false stories, told them to people, and are still telling them.*
- *Which stories do you mean, and what fault do you find in them?*
- *The fault one ought to find first and foremost, especially if the falsehood isn't well told.*
- *For example?*
- *When a story gives a bad image of what the gods and heroes are like, the way a painter does whose picture is not at all like the things he's trying to paint.”* [Republic. Book II. 377d-e]

Plato does not deviate from the rules of the philosophical search for truth, adhering to logical conclusions and, for certain reasons, resorting to allegory. In *Republic*, he establishes the initial postulates of the future narrative: descriptions of the principles of building an ideal state and definitions of metaphorical geometry, astronomy, and numbers, which he uses in the *Timaeus* dialogue to describe the principles of building a good society and fair relationships in it. Thus, we find that all three dialogues have the same goal – to convey the truth about Atlantis.

Timaeus' code

Although Socrates gave two narrators with different political views the opportunity to tell story about Atlantis and its great and marvelous deeds, at first sight, only Critias took advantage of this opportunity. Timaeus devoted his monologue to a completely different subject, the creation by a higher power – the Demiurge – of the entire material world, of the four Kinds, of being, of man, and something else incomprehensible. At the same time, at the beginning of his narrative, Timaeus utters a mysterious phrase: “*Now to find the maker and father of this universe [to pan] is hard enough, and even if I succeeded, to declare him to everyone is impossible.*” [Timaeus. 28c] What does this mean? Timaeus openly says that it was the Demiurge who built, constructed, and put in order our entire world and the Universe. The Demiurge is God. God created everything – everyone knows it and all world religions talk about it. What, then, cannot be told to everyone?

For a particular reason, Plato first gave the floor to a character who represented the oligarchs and tyrants of ancient Athens. Critias told a myth that praises Ancient Athens and denigrates Atlantis, that is, Atlantis is the stumbling block about which the oligarchs and tyrants hide the truth. This technique is still used by the media today.

Another interesting fact is that only Critias is allowed to pronounce the name of Atlantis in Plato's dialogues, all the others call it “goddess,” “our city” or “citizens,” confirming the guess that the Athenian authorities imposed a ban on information and truth about Atlantis:

"CRITIAS: <...> The story is that our city had performed great and marvelous deeds in ancient times, which, owing to the passage of time and to the destruction of human life, have vanished. Of all these deeds one in particular was magnificent. It is this one that we should now do well to commemorate and present to you <...>

SOCRATES: Splendid! Tell me, though, what was that ancient deed our city performed, the one that Solon reported and old Critias told you about? I've never heard of it. They say it really happened?" [Timaeus. 20e-21a]

This is confirmed by the fact that even today, in a seemingly free world, we have not made a single step in unraveling Atlantis. There is not a single material artifact or document that belongs to this ancient state. Chances are that we are misattributing them to other peoples and epochs. All we know is that it existed and died around 10,000 BC as a result of a tectonic cataclysm. It seems that either Atlantis is an invention of Plato or the information about it has been carefully cleaned up.

This raises a reasonable question: why was the Athenian oligarchy afraid of the knowledge of Atlantis? The answer lies on the surface, in *Republic*. The ideal state, described by Plato, is a state built on the principles of collectivism, and there is no place in it for private property and oligarchy, it is ruled by the people, all means of production and land are publicly owned, and the government expresses the interests of the working people and not a handful of the rich. Atlantis was built on these principles. Thus, *Republic* is entirely devoted to Atlantis and describes the foundations of its state. This knowledge, coupled with the hidden achievements of the people of Atlantis, could undermine the influence of the oligarchic government up to its overthrow.

Timaeus calls the creator of all things the Demiurge. The word “demiurge” (master, craftsman, creator) is of ancient Greek origin and formed from two Greek concepts – “land, people” and “work, labor, work.” The generalized semantic meaning of these terms can also be expressed by the expression “working people,” which does not at all contradict the first variant. At the same time, this word does not convey any religious meaning but organically fits into the concept of collectivistic Atlantis.

From all of the above, it is clear that Plato had something to hide from the censors of his time and the censors of future times too. Therefore, he had to write Timaeus’ monologue using allegories, metaphors, and images:

"Now in every subject it is of utmost importance to begin at the natural beginning, and so, on the subject of an image and its model, we must make the following specification: the accounts we give of things have the same character as the subjects they set forth. So accounts of what is stable and fixed and transparent to understanding are themselves stable and unshifting. We must do our very best to make these accounts as irrefutable and invincible as any account may be. On the other hand, accounts we give of that which has been formed to be like that reality, since they are accounts of what is a likeness, are themselves likely, and stand in proportion to the previous accounts, i.e., what being is to becoming, truth is to convincingness." [Timaeus. 29b-c]

Plato calls allegories and metaphors “images,” and the objects and actions that they conceal “models.”

"As for going further and giving an account of other stuffs of this sort along the lines of the likely stories we have been following, that is no complicated matter. And should one take

a break and lay aside accounts about the things that always are, deriving instead a carefree pleasure from surveying the likely accounts about becoming (of humanity - Y.A.), he would provide his life with a moderate and sensible diversion. So shall we, then, at this time give free rein to such a diversion and go right on to set out the next likelihoods on these subjects <...>” [Timaeus. 59c-d]

Following his system, before the start of Timaeus' monologue, Plato gives a metaphorical definition of two opposite approaches to building society:

“As I see it, then, we must begin by making the following distinction: What is that which always is and has no becoming, and what is that which becomes but never is? The former is grasped by understanding, which involves a reasoned account. It is unchanging. The latter is grasped by opinion, which involves unreasoning sense perception. It comes to be and passes away, but never really is. Now everything that comes to be must of necessity come to be by the agency of some cause, for it is impossible for anything to come to be without a cause. So whenever the craftsman looks at what is always changeless and, using a thing of that kind as his model, reproduces its form and character, then, of necessity, all that he so completes is beautiful. But were he to look at a thing that has come to be and use as his model something that has been begotten, his work will lack beauty.” [Timaeus. 27d-28b].

Our civilization is based on agriculture and productive labor. Both of these subjects require a well-coordinated and organized work activity. No matter what system of social relations is established in society, the life of society depends entirely on collective labor. At the same time, the system of social relations can change – oligarchic to democratic, democratic to anarchic, anarchic to tyrannical, etc. (Plato discusses this in *Republic*.) All these relations are tied to wealth, except collectivism. Collectivism requires the individual to evaluate his actions, putting his concern for his neighbor, interests, and the welfare of society in the first place. This mental and moral work requires “*understanding, which involves a reasoned account.*”

The system of social values that opposes to collectivism is focused on the accumulation of wealth and the desire for power. This part of society is driven by insatiable greed, selfishness and the desire to satisfy one's personal needs first, that is, “*grasped by opinion, which involves unreasoning sense perception.*” These qualities are characteristic of the unintelligent animal world, which our ancestor, the prehistoric hunter-gatherer, partly was.

According to Plato, the difference between a civilized man and a savage is that the former is able to control his emotions, think rationally and make deliberate choices, even if they go against his convictions (beliefs, outlook on life, feelings). At the same time, the first understands which of the parties is good and which is evil. The second irrationally follows his feelings:

“For the one of them arises in us by teaching, the other by persuasion; and the one is always in company with true reasoning, whereas the other is irrational; and the one is immovable by persuasion, whereas the other is alterable by persuasion; and of the one we must assert that every man partakes, but of Reason only the gods and but a small class of men.”² [Timaeus. 51e]

² Plato. *Plato in Twelve Volumes*, Vol. 9 translated by W.R.M. Lamb. Cambridge, MA, Harvard University Press; London, William Heinemann Ltd. 1925.

Thus, in the context of civilization, collectivism remains an ever-existing being, and private property remains an ever-emerging but not eternal one. Plato argues that if the Demiurge, the builder and creator of society, uses the principles of collectivism, then “*all that he so completes is beautiful,*” otherwise “*his work will lack beauty.*”

Where did Plato get all these ideas from? Here’s what he says about it:

“We should accept on faith the assertions of those figures of the past who claimed to be the offspring of gods. They must surely have been well informed about their own ancestors. So we cannot avoid believing the children of gods, even though their accounts lack plausible or compelling proofs. Rather, we should follow custom and believe them, on the ground that what they claim to be reporting are matters of their own concern. Accordingly, let us accept their account of how these gods came to be and state what it is.” [Timaeus. 40d-e]

It is worth noting one interesting fact that has only recently become known to science, thanks to the numerous works of archaeologists and paleontologists. To date, five regions on Earth are known where agriculture and animal husbandry appeared around 12,000 years ago: East Asia (China), West Asia (the Fertile Crescent region and North Africa), India, Central America, and South America (Andes). Plato also mentions five worlds but convinces the reader that there can only be one:

“Anyone following this whole line of reasoning might very well be puzzled about whether we should say that there are infinitely many worlds or a finite number of them. If so, he would have to conclude that to answer, ‘infinitely many,’ is to take the view of one who is really ‘unfinished’ in things he ought to be ‘finished’ in. He would do better to stop with the question whether we should say that there’s really just one world or five and be puzzled about that. Well, our ‘probable account’ answer declares there to be but one world, a god — though someone else, taking other things into consideration, will come to a different opinion. We must set him aside, however.

Let us now assign to fire, earth, water and air the structures which have just been given their formations in our speech.” [Timaeus. 55c-d]

So, what subject or model does the allegorical cosmos hide behind?

Allegories

As we have already noted, Plato was forced by circumstances to resort to allegorical methods of presenting information:

“My account will be an unusual one, but since you are well schooled in the fields of learning in terms of which I must of necessity proceed with my exposition, I’m sure you’ll follow me.” [Timaeus. 53c]

We can therefore begin to “decipher” his verbal images. The set of basic allegorical concepts is limited: space, universe, sky, fire, earth, water and air or wind, soul, movement, figures, and shapes.

Cosmos, universe and heaven.

“Now as to the whole universe or world order [kosmos] — let’s just call it (humanity – Y.A.) by whatever name is most acceptable in a given context — there is a question we need to consider first.” [Timaeus. 28b]

Plato uses these three concepts to depict a civilized society based on productive labor and organized according to laws common to all (i.e., having some structure). Since we are talking about the birth of humanity, it is worth clarifying that prehistoric hunter-gatherers did not form and did not represent any meaningful society - they were not organized and did not engage in collective productive labor (except for the production of stone tools for hunting and, in some cases, dwellings). This mass of people, which became the beginning of mankind, had no idea of any laws, social relations, or their forms. Their social knowledge was empty:

*“This is why the thing that is to receive in itself all the elemental kinds **must be totally devoid of any characteristics**. Think of people who make fragrant ointments. <...> The liquids that are to receive the fragrances they make as odorless as possible. Or think of people who work **at impressing shapes** upon soft materials. They emphatically refuse to allow any such material to already have some definite shape. Instead, they’ll even it out and make it as smooth as it can be.*

*In the same way, then, if the thing that is to receive repeatedly throughout its whole self the likenesses of the intelligible objects, the things which always are — if it is to do so successfully, then it **ought to be devoid of any inherent characteristics of its own**. <...> But if we speak of it as **an invisible and characterless sort of thing**, one that receives all things and shares in a most perplexing way in what is intelligible, a thing extremely difficult to comprehend, we shall not be misled.”* [Timaeus. 50e-51b]

Plato characterizes the savages as extremely elusive due to their small numbers and their way of life. For the sake of survival, they had to hide from a cave and saber-toothed predators, from the same wild hunters, who did not disdain violence and cannibalism, arrange ambushes during hunting, etc.

Humanity, as a rational civilization, was born when the nomadic prehistoric savages ceased to survive by hunting and gathering and were organized into sedentary communities that grew their food, that is, they were taught agriculture:

“Anything that it did or experienced it was designed to do or experience within itself and by itself. For the builder thought that if it were self-sufficient, it would be a better thing than if it required other things.” [Timaeus. 33c-d]

This change in the lives of the savages was brought about by the Demiurge, the representatives of the working people of Atlantis:

*“Now why did he **who framed this whole universe of becoming frame it?** Let us state the reason why: He was good, and one who is good can never become jealous of anything. And so, being free of jealousy, he wanted everything to become as much like himself as was possible. In fact, men of wisdom will tell you (and you couldn’t do better than to accept their claim) that this, more than anything else, was the most preeminent reason for the origin of the world’s coming to be. The god wanted everything to be good and nothing to be bad so far as that was possible, and so he took over all that was visible — **not at rest but in discordant and disorderly motion — and brought it from a state of disorder to one***

of order, because he believed that order was in every way better than disorder.” [Timaeus. 29d-30a]

Plato described the chaotic nomadic life of hunter-gatherers as a disorderly and erratic movement. Movement is activity. Plato also touched on the change in the behavior of savages due to the change in their way of life (Timaeus. 33c-34a).

The society of Atlantis was built on the principles of collectivism, and therefore no one there “*never become jealous of anything*” or experienced “envy,” i.e., no one sought personal gain, but everyone served for the good of society. According to the treatises of Hermes Trismegistus (“Corpus Hermeticum”), only a collective can be good, but not an individual. Therefore, the human Universe was created as good society by a certain benevolent collective of representatives (Demiurge) of Atlantis.

Why did Plato associate the Universe and the cosmos with the image of the newborn humanity? Firstly, because of the blackness of space and the light of stars, which never change their position. Blackness symbolizes the “dark times” - the period of prehistoric savagery in which there was intelligent life and wild nature before the birth of mankind. The centers of this intelligent life settled in caves and kindled their fires there when they mastered it. They were not visible in the darkness of the night and were changing its location time from time. With the advent of agriculture, people began to form settled villages, and now their fires burned in the same open places, near sown fields and pastures with cattle. These fires were now visible at night like stars and were barely changing its location. Each time there were more and more of these lights – people were multiplying.

Secondly, the movement of objects – stars, planets, and other stones – in outer space is subject to strict, eternal physical laws. This is the second characteristic of the born society – submission to uniform social laws, which the savages did not have before. They received them from the Atlanteans. These laws organized the savages, began to govern their lives, and ignited the Light of the life of humanity, just as the Sun gives the light of life to all species on planet Earth.

Thirdly, the immutable laws of the Universe compel planets and stars to make circular rotations both around their axis and around each other. This movement symbolizes both the cyclical (repetitive) activity of agricultural labor and activities in other areas of newborn humanity.

Four Kinds: earth, fire, water and air

Thus, humanity was born from intelligent beings unfamiliar with any social formations. At the same time, labor, the exchange of products and tools, living together and fighting predators and other savages who invaded the occupied territory, hunting, and other activities using stone piercing and cutting tools were their daily activities. But all this happened at the level of the savage habits of prehistoric man:

“Indeed, it is a fact that before this took place the four kinds all lacked proportion and measure, and at the time the ordering of the universe was undertaken, fire, water, earth and air initially possessed certain traces of what they are now. They were indeed in the condition one would expect thoroughly god-forsaken things to be in.” [Timaeus. 53b]

The Demiurge of Atlantis gathered these disparate savages and organized them into communities:

“So, finding them in this natural condition, the first thing the god then did was to give them their distinctive shapes, using forms and numbers.” [Timaeus. 53b]

It is worth explaining that the four elements (kinds) mentioned – earth, fire, water, and air – are the “image” of the four social groups classified according to the type of activity: earth – farmers and herdsmen, fire – defenders or warriors, water – craftsmen, and air – merchants or people involved in the exchange of goods. All four of these activities were partially represented in the prehistoric daily life of hunter-gatherers. When the savages were organized into settled communities, these four kinds became more rational activities. Interestingly, Plato manifested the three main kinds – earth, water, and fire – at the very beginning of the dialogue:

“SOCRATES: Didn’t we begin by separating off the class of farmers (earth – Y.A.) and all the other craftsmen (water – Y.A.) in the city from the class of those who were to wage war (fire – Y.A.) on its behalf?” [Timaeus. 17c]

Moreover, Plato appoints earth and fire (gatherers and hunters, i.e. wild men) as the beginning of civilization:

“Now that which (humanity – Y.A.) comes to be must have bodily form, and be both visible and tangible, but nothing could ever become visible apart from fire (prehistoric hunters – Y.A.), nor tangible without something solid, nor solid without earth (agriculture – Y.A.). That is why, as he began to put the body of the universe together, the god came to make it out of fire and earth.” [Timaeus. 31b]

Plato used the image of fire to represent two archetypes: fire symbolizes both hunters and defenders. The earth, in this context, simultaneously symbolizes gatherers and agriculture. Although earth is later received the archetypal image of farmers and herdsmen. Agriculture requires a settled way of life and collective labor. Settled and organized communities are described by Plato as visible and “solid” formations. Also, as the story progresses, fire becomes the image not only of warriors but also of state representatives, who must protect both the people and the law.

Geometry. Triangles and pyramid.

Turning to the description of the birth of the four elements, Plato switches to geometry. He begins to manipulate triangles to construct various shapes from them. And we find an interesting correspondence here: Plato describes four social kinds, of which three (triangle) are the main ones. Given that organized sedentary communities appeared on Earth with the birth of mankind, which, like any organized society (and even those built on the principles of collectivism), should have a hierarchical structure. The hierarchy can be represented as a pyramid or simply as a triangle. But a triangle can be used not only to show a hierarchy but also to show the relationship of its sides or its parts:

“Of the many [scalene right-angled] triangles, then, we posit as the one most excellent, surpassing the others, that one from [a pair of] which the equilateral triangle is constructed as a third figure.” [Timaeus. 54a]

An equilateral triangle is the most beautiful example of complete social equality. From four such triangles, Plato builds the first three-dimensional figure – a tetrahedral pyramid that divides a certain sphere into equal parts (Timaeus. 55a). The rest of the volumetric figures become more complex as the number of triangles increases, but each time “we get the primary solid form, which is one that divides the entire circumference [sc. of the sphere in which it is inscribed] into equal

and similar parts.” [Timaeus. 55a] That is, the idea of equality, which is the basis of collectivism, was introduced at the birth of humanity by the representatives of Atlantis:

“So if the body of the universe were to have come to be as a two dimensional plane, a single middle term would have sufficed to bind together its conjoining terms with itself. As it was, however, the universe was to be a solid, and solids are never joined together by just one middle term but always by two. Hence the god set water and air between fire and earth, and made them as proportionate to one another as was possible, so that what fire is to air, air is to water, and what air is to water, water is to earth. He then bound them together and thus he constructed the visible and tangible universe. This is the reason why these four particular constituents were used to beget the body of the world, making it a symphony of proportion. They bestowed friendship upon it, so that, having come together into a unity with itself, it could not be undone by anyone but the one who had bound it together.”

[Timaeus. 32a-c]

Four Kinds are the initial minimum necessary elements for the birth of civilization. They differ in their characteristics. For example, farmers and herdsmen almost never change their place of residence; craftsmen are concentrated in towns but are not tied to them and can change their place of residence, “flowing” from one village to another; merchants (or goods exchangers), warriors and civil servants are the most mobile, armed, but also the smallest group of society. To explain the essence of these kinds, Plato compares their characteristics:

“Now of the [right-angled] triangles we originally postulated, the face belonging to those that have equal sides has a greater natural stability than that belonging to triangles that have unequal sides, and the surface that is composed of the two triangles, the equilateral quadrangle [the square], holds its position with greater stability than does the equilateral triangle, both in their parts and as wholes. Hence, if we assign this solid figure to earth, we are preserving our ‘likely account.’ And of the solid figures that are left, we shall next assign the least mobile of them to water, to fire the most mobile, and to air the one in between. This means that the tiniest body belongs to fire, the largest to water, and the intermediate one to air — and also that the body with the sharpest edges belongs to fire, the next sharpest to air, and the third sharpest to water. Now in all these cases the body that has the fewest faces is of necessity the most mobile, in that it, more than any other, has edges that are the sharpest and best fit for cutting in every direction. It is also the lightest, in that it is made up of the least number of identical parts. The second body ranks second in having these same properties, and the third ranks third. So let us follow our account, which is not only likely but also correct, and take the solid form of the pyramid that we saw constructed as the element or the seed of fire. And let us say that the second form in order of generation is that of air, and the third that of water.” [Timaeus. 55e-56b]

Plato mentioned a three-dimensional pyramid here, but before that, he assigned a square to the earth as the most stable base. It may seem like a play on words or a coincidence, but the voluminous pyramid was meant to make us recall the pyramids in Egypt: the Great Pyramid has a **square base and four faces** that are **equilateral triangles!** All its sides, both triangles and squares, have the same length – 231 meters!

It is generally accepted that the term “pyramid” describes a polyhedron whose bottom face, called the base, is an arbitrary polygon, and the remaining (side) faces are triangles with a common

vertex. However, the semantic meaning of this word has nothing to do with geometry or with any three-dimensional figures or shapes in general. The term comes from the Greek “pyramidos” (“pyra” – fire, light and “midos” – path), which means “the path of light.” It turns out that the term “pyramid” did not refer to mountainous forms but to ideology, the concept of the organization of society. The gigantic buildings of Egypt, which we today call “pyramids,” are monuments erected in honor of the creation of a new civilization. Their architectural form symbolizes the principle described above. Plato points out that the pyramid was the beginning of mankind, the “seed of fire,” i.e., small society with an elementary hierarchy. And humanity, like a living “kosmos,” began its journey along the path of light. This concept implies the collectivist principle of building a society in which people are organized, socially equal, united, subject to a single law, and work for the good of the community and not for personal gain or wealth.

Thus, the lower square face of the Great Pyramid also symbolizes agriculture as the basis of civilization upon which all four kinds depend. The four triangular faces are the four initial hierarchically organized kinds: farmers and herdsmen, craftsmen, defenders, and those who were engaged in the exchange of goods. The equal size of the sides symbolizes unity, equality, and collectivism. And if humanity accepts these principles, then it will follow the Path of Light, as it did for the first few thousand years until the first states and merchants amassed wealth appeared.

Speaking of equality and unity, Plato also touched on the subject of social stratification and inequality under opposite conditions. The latter leads to social instability and the birth of his various workers' rights movements:

“Now as for motion and rest, unless there is agreement on the manner and the conditions in which these two come to be, we will have many obstacles to face in our subsequent course of reasoning. Although we have already said something about them, we need to say this as well: there will be no motion in a state of uniformity. For it is difficult, or rather impossible, for something to be moved without something to set it in motion, or something to set a thing in motion without something to be moved by it. When either is absent, there is no motion, but [when they are present] it is quite impossible for them to be uniform. And so let us always presume that rest is found in a state of uniformity and to attribute motion to non-uniformity. The latter, moreover, is caused by inequality, the origin of which we have already discussed.” [Timaeus. 57e-58a]

Soul

However, let us return to the universe, because we have not yet considered one of its important elements that makes it a living thing.

“To repeat what was said at the outset, the things (prehistoric people – Y.A.) we see were in a condition of disorderliness when the god introduced as much proportionality into them and in as many ways — making each thing proportional both to itself and to other things — as was possible for making them be commensurable and proportionate. For at the time they had no proportionality at all, except by chance, nor did any of them qualify at all for the names (farmers, defenders, craftsmen – Y.A.) we now use to name them, names like fire, water, etc. All these things, rather, the god first gave order to, and then out of them he proceeded to construct this universe, a single living thing that contains within itself all

living things, mortal (not well-intentioned societies/states – Y.A.) or immortal (well-intentioned societies/states – Y.A.).” [Timaeus. 69b-c]

Plato described humanity as a living being, and all living beings are known to have a soul.

What is a soul? Its physical nature is unknown, but it is what qualitatively distinguishes one person from another and determines the actions of the individual. In fact, the soul is a set of certain views on the surrounding world and behavioral reflexes to personal and social “irritants.” We can say that the soul is a set of personal rules that govern the behavior of an individual.

In this case, what is the soul in the context of a large group of people, such as a community? It is simply a set of laws and rules that govern both the life of the whole group and the relationships between its members. Unlike savage existence, the entire civilized society is subject to the main and unshakable laws without exception:

*“In its center (*kosmos* – Y.A.) he set a soul, which he extended throughout the whole body, and with which he then covered the body outside. And he set it to turn in a circle, a single solitary universe, whose very excellence enables it to keep its own company without requiring anything else. For its knowledge of and friendship with itself is enough. All this, then, explains why this world which he begat for himself is a blessed god.”* [Timaeus. 34b]

From the fact that the Atlanteans (Demiurge) gave the savages the laws of a civilized society by which they themselves lived, it follows that these laws existed long before the birth of mankind:

“As for the world’s soul, even though we are now embarking on an account of it after we’ve already given an account of its body, it isn’t the case that the god devised it to be younger than the body. For the god would not have united them and then allow the elder to be ruled by the younger. <...> The god, however, gave priority and seniority to the soul, both in its coming to be and in the degree of its excellence, to be the body’s mistress and to rule over it as her subject.” [Timaeus. 34c]

The law establishes the order of subordination, i.e., it organizes a hierarchy (triangle) in work groups: chief (elder), subordinates (younger). Plato designated such organized groups of people (collectives) with the concept of “body.”

Three Essences of the Soul

However, even when people voluntarily come together in groups to jointly solve any problems, opinions may differ on some issues. In such cases, a vote is held and the minority consciously obeys the opinion of the majority. Plato described this principle with the help of three beings:

*“The components from which he made the soul (a Law – Y.A.) and the way in which he made it were as follows: In between **the Being that is indivisible and always changeless** (majority opinion – Y.A.), and the one that is **divisible and comes to be in the corporeal realm** (individual opinion – Y.A.), he mixed a third, intermediate form of being (the law of subordination of the minority to the majority – Y.A.), derived from the other two. Similarly, he made a mixture of the Same, and then one of the Different, in between their indivisible and their corporeal, divisible counterparts. And he took the three mixtures and mixed them together to make a uniform mixture, **forcing the Different, which was hard to mix, into conformity with the Same** (minority submits to the majority – Y.A.).”* [Timaeus. 34c-35b]

In general, it is difficult to imagine how 12,000 years ago the Atlanteans were able to gather together, organize, and forced to obey unprecedented laws, though thinking, but free, wild, scattered, and, for the most part, competing with each other, savages. How could they force or persuade eternally free (up to cannibalism) beings to voluntarily limit their freedom? And this process took place on almost every continent of the planet.

Groups of savages could hardly exist for a long time on the basis of mere laws. They needed a purposeful material basis for staying together. The production of food became such a basis:

"The gods, therefore, devised something to protect him. They made another mixture and caused another nature to grow, one congenial to our human nature though endowed with other features and other sensations, so as to be a different living thing. These are now cultivated trees, plants and seeds, taught by the art of agriculture to be domesticated for our use. But at first the only kinds there were were wild ones, older than our cultivated kinds. <...>

All these varieties were planted by our masters, to whom we are subject, to nourish us." [Timaeus. 77a-c]

Could people who lived before our time, in Plato's time, when sciences were still in their infancy, and some (such as genetics, paleontology, or the concept of selection) did not even exist, have known that cereals and garden plants were artificially created and did not always exist? After all, knowledge of the origin of species was only discovered in the 19th century by Charles Darwin, and only it helped to develop the science of selection. Moreover, Plato possessed the information that the Demiurge created not only plants but also domesticated animals:

"Prior to the coming to be of time, the universe had already been made to resemble in various respects the model in whose likeness the god was making it, but the resemblance still fell short in that it didn't yet contain all the living things that were to have come to be within it. This remaining task he went on to perform, casting the world into the nature of its model. And so he determined that the living thing he was making should possess the same kinds and numbers of living things as those which, according to the discernment of Intellect, are contained within the real Living Thing. Now there are four of these kinds: first, the heavenly race of gods (work collectives – Y.A.); next, the kind that has wings and travels through the air (domesticated bird – Y.A.); third, the kind that lives in water (pond fish? – Y.A.); and fourth, the kind that has feet and lives on land (domesticated ungulates and cloven-hoofed animals – Y.A.). The gods he made mostly out of fire (prehistoric hunters – Y.A.), to be the brightest and fairest to the eye." [Timaeus. 39e-40a]

Prehistoric hunter-gatherers did not need to keep track of the seasons or time. They saw changes in nature, but their attention was occupied only by hunting and searching for edible fruits, roots, berries, nuts, etc. Having collected fruits in one area, they were moving on to next one. Only with the advent of agriculture did newborn farmers have to keep track of the seasons and keep track of time, that is, the concept of time arose in the minds of the earthlings:

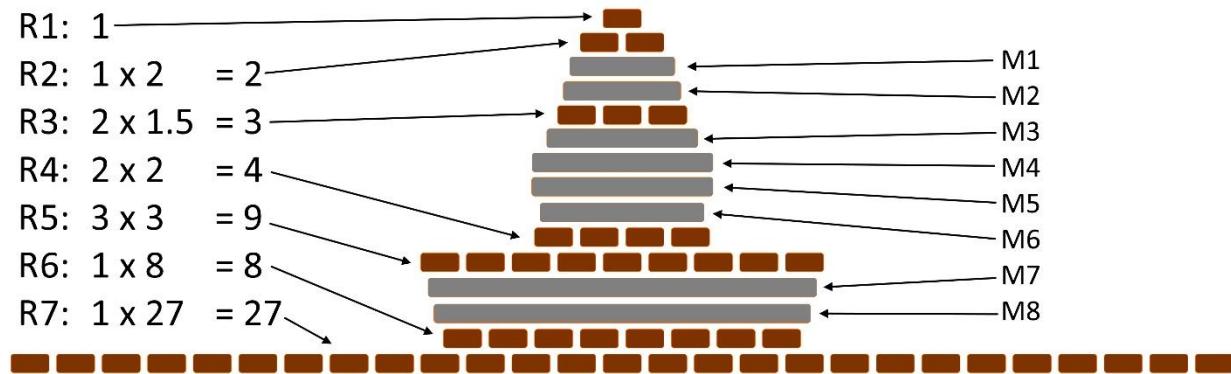
"For before the heavens came to be, there were no days or nights, no months or years. But now, at the same time as he framed the heavens, he devised their coming to be. <...> Time, then, came to be together with the universe so that just as they were begotten together, they might also be undone together, should there ever be an undoing of them." [Timaeus. 37e, 38b]

If civilization perishes, then there will be no one to keep track of time, and therefore it will also disappear. Only natural and cosmic cycles will remain.

Having given the savages the law (Word) orally (hunter-gatherers had no written language at that time), domesticated plants and animals, and introducing them to productive work, which provided them with food sufficiency, the Demiurge created humanity, consisting of collectivistic communities, – “*a shrine for the everlasting gods*” [Timaeus. 37c], and their “*soul was woven together with the body from the center on out in every direction to the outermost limit of the universe, and covered it all around on the outside. And, revolving within itself, it initiated a divine beginning of unceasing, intelligent life for all time.*” [Timaeus. 36e]

Temple, Cross and Seven Rulers

But Plato was not satisfied with merely describing the general principles of collectivism and began to make incomprehensible manipulations with the soul-law of mankind (Timaeus 35b-36b). As a result, he came up with a figure depicting a temple.



Thus, Plato, following the knowledge of the Atlanteans, tries to give us the idea that the temple is not a building for religious rites. The temple is a good society built on the principles of collectivism: unity, equality, friendship, and love.

Continuing to manipulate this non-material entity, Plato creates an image of the cross:

“*Next, he sliced this entire compound in two along its length, joined the two halves together center to center like an X*” [Timaeus. 36b].

In such an intricate way, Plato interpreted the most common symbol in our world – the cross: it symbolizes the union (intersecting) of collective (Same) and personal (Other) opinions.

Then he smoothly moves on to another interesting and mysterious “esoteric” symbol, to the Seven. The ancient philosopher took two crossbars and

“*bent them back in a circle, attaching each half to itself end to end and to the ends of the other half at the point opposite to the one where they had been joined together. He then included them in that motion which revolves in the same place without variation, and began to make the one the outer, and the other the inner circle. And he decreed that the outer movement should be the movement of the Same, while the inner one should be that of the Different. He made the movement of the Same revolve toward the right by way of the side, and that of the Different toward the left by way of the diagonal, and he made the revolution of the Same, i.e., the uniform, the dominant one in that he left this one alone undivided, while he divided the inner one six times, to make seven unequal circles. His divisions*

corresponded to the several double and triple intervals, of which there were three each.” [Timaeus. 36b-d].

Since we are talking about the law-soul, it is logical to assume that these circles also refer to laws. The large circle symbolizes the principle of collective unity, and the small ones symbolize intra-community principles, laws, and requirements, but philosopher does not describe any of them. Plato describes the process of creating a civilized society from semi-wild creatures. And one of the important components of this process was the formation of a new worldview among these savages. This teaching and upbringing process is still relevant today. Thus, the seven circles are the seven basic requirements that regulate the behavior of the individual in the community. Hermes Trismegistus taught that in order for a savage to become part of a working community (e.i., to be raised to the level of God), he must pass through seven zones (circles):

“And to the first zone, the Human-being gives-up the activity/energy of increasing and of decreasing³, and to the second zone, the human-being gives-up the activation of the means of vice by fraud, and to the third zone, the activation of the appetite for fraud, and to the fourth, the activation of the arrogance of authority, and to the fifth, the activation of impious daring and of reckless audacity, and to the sixth, the activation of the avaricious impulses for wealth , and to the seventh zone, the Human-being Gives-up the activation of the falsehood which waits in ambush.” [Corpus Hermeticum. Chapter I, #25]⁴

These seven requirements are called the Seven Rulers. So, these seven rules regulated the behavior of the individual in the community, forcing him to care first for the members of the community and the community as a whole and only secondly for himself.

How Paradise was lost

As a result of the titanic work of organizing and educating all the savages of the planet, a young human civilization emerged. It was not yet fully developed – it had no cities, states, empires, social classes, or complex industries. But the true gods lived there – communities where people worked for each other and for the good of their society.

The human population of the Earth began to multiply. The number of settlements and work communities also increased. The increased need for tools and household items led to a division of labor. Relationships in newborn society became more complicated and led to the birth of new laws. The laws of evolution require adaptation to new conditions, so cities, states, and empires were destined to emerge:

“There remain still three kinds of mortal beings (city, state, empire – Y.A.) that have not yet been begotten; and as long as they have not come to be, the universe (humanity, civilization – Y.A.) will be incomplete, for it will still lack within it all the kinds of living things it must have if it is to be sufficiently complete. But if these creatures came to be and came to share in life by my hand (demiurge, representatives of Atlantean nation – Y.A.), they would rival the gods. It is you, then, who must turn yourselves to the task of fashioning these living things, as your nature (the savage one – Y.A.) allows. This will assure their

³ Not to break the unity of the collective - not to leave the community because of disagreement and not to form a new one in which the former minority opinion would become predominant.

⁴ *Hermes Trismegistus: Corpus Hermeticum* by Juan and Maria Balboa

mortality, and this whole universe will really be a completed whole. Imitate the power I used in causing you to be.” [Timaeus. 41b-c]

“After the sowing, he handed over to the young gods the task of weaving mortal bodies. He had them make whatever else remained that the human soul still needed to have (new laws – Y.A.), plus whatever goes with those things. He gave them the task of ruling over these mortal living things and of giving them the finest, the best possible guidance they could give, without being responsible for any evils these creatures might bring upon themselves.” [Timaeus. 42d-e]

Civilization began to live and develop. At the same time, people, violating the laws of good and eternal life given to them, isolated farmers, craftsmen, defenders, and merchants into new states (“*mortal living things*”). The states began to fight with each other, either by annexing or losing territories and populations:

*“His children immediately began to attend to and obey their father’s assignment. Now that they had received the immortal principle of the mortal living thing, they began to imitate the craftsman who had made them. They borrowed parts of fire, earth, water and air from the world, intending to pay them back again, and bonded together into a unity the parts they had taken, but not with those indissoluble bonds by which they themselves were held together. Instead, they proceeded to fuse them together with copious rivets so small as to be invisible, thereby making **each body** a unit made up of all the components. And they went on to invest this body — into and out of which things were to flow (the unification and separation of the state – Y.A.) — with the orbits of the immortal soul.”* [Timaeus. 42e-43a]

The principle of Common Unity was violated and became a private characteristic of “*each body*.
New laws that granted unequal rights to various kinds of society formed various social orders. Inequality and injustice have created social and political movements and tensions within states:

“These orbits, now bound within a mighty river, neither mastered that river nor were mastered by it, but tossed it violently and were violently tossed by it. Consequently the living thing as a whole did indeed move, but it would proceed in a disorderly, random and irrational way that involved all six of the motions. <...> For mighty as the nourishment-bearing billow was in its ebb and flow, mightier still was the turbulence produced by the disturbances caused by the things that struck against the living things. Such disturbances would occur when the body encountered and collided with external fire (i.e., fire other than the body’s own) or for that matter with a hard lump of earth or with the flow of gliding waters, or when it was caught up by a surge of air-driven winds.” [Timaeus. 43a-c]

Moreover, society has abandoned the principles of collectivism and equality and has given primacy to the savage instincts of wealth accumulation, the lust for power, deception, and the satisfaction of other animal selfish desires, creating social inequality. The seven founding principles of Hermes, which created mankind, have been violated:

“They completely bound that of the Same by flowing against it in the opposite direction, and held it fast just as it was beginning to go its way. And they further shook the orbit of the Different right through, with the result that they twisted every which way the three intervals of the double and the three of the triple, as well as the middle terms of the ratios of 3/2, 4/3 and 9/8 that connect them. [These agitations did not undo them, however,] because they cannot be completely undone except by the one who had bound them together.

They mutilated and disfigured the circles in every possible way so that the circles barely held together and though they remained in motion..." [Timaeus. 43d-e]

In the end, the whole original good order was turned upside down: good began to be considered bad, bad – good; those in power began to distort and hide the history of the birth of civilization, as well as invent new unjust laws:

"...they moved without rhyme or reason, sometimes in the opposite direction, sometimes sideways and sometimes upside down — like a man upside down, head propped against the ground and holding his feet up against something. In that position his right side will present itself both to him and to those looking at him as left, and his left side as right. It is this very thing — and others like it — that had such a dramatic effect upon the revolutions of the soul. Whenever they encounter something outside of them characterizable as same or different, they will speak of it as "the same as" something, or as "different from" something else when the truth is just the opposite, so proving themselves to be misled and unintelligent. Also, at this stage souls do not have a ruling orbit taking the lead. And so when certain sensations come in from outside and attack them, they sweep the soul's entire vessel along with them. It is then that these revolutions, however much in control they seem to be, are actually under their control." [Timaeus. 43e-44a]

Thus, paradise was lost, which was conceived as a blessing for all people. Animal instincts to satisfy personal needs prevailed in people.

Afterwards

Plato provided us with rather unexpected and detailed information about the participation of the Demiurge of Atlantis in the birth of humanity, about the principles of building a good society, the first laws of the first communities, and the education of savages. However, the thoughtful reader will surely ask the question: "If Plato was so well aware of the affairs of Atlantis, then he must have known exactly where it was. Why didn't he point to that place?" Plato actually knew the origin of the Demiurge of Atlantis and spoke about it, although not in the *Timaeus*, but in the *Republic*. And finding Atlantis state on Earth is impossible for one simple reason:

"(Glaucon.) I understand. You mean that he'll be willing to take part in the politics of the city we were founding and describing, the one that exists in theory, for I don't think it exists anywhere on earth.

(Socrates.) But perhaps, I said, there is a model of it in heaven, for anyone who wants to look at it and to make himself its citizen on the strength of what he sees. It makes no difference whether it is or ever will be somewhere, for he would take part in the practical affairs of that city and no other." [Republic. Book IX. 592a-b]